

**YOUTH EDUCATION AND SAFETY ADVISORY BOARD**  
**MAY 21, 2007**

**1. ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Board members present were Chair John Pisula, Vice-Chair Alice Harrington, Lynne Marie Watters, Sharon Zane and Eric Swalley. Also present was Board Secretary Jenevia Edwards recording the meeting. Colleen Gulla, Barbara Ann Tilley, and Marcy Fallahzadeh were absent.

**2. PRESENTATION**

**2.1 Davie Schools – Phyllis Hope, School Board Member (District 6)**

Chair Pisula introduced Broward County School Board Member Phyllis Hope of District 6, which represented most of western Davie. He stated that as part of the safety program and education outreach, the Board would like to get involved with activities taking place in the schools in Davie.

Ms. Hope explained that there were two things involved about the capacity of schools to determine if schools were overcrowded. She added that every school had a core number of students with which they were allowed to operate; however she was unable to provide that information to the Board unless she knew if there was an overcrowding issue. Ms. Hope stated that at a recent workshop, the decision was made to delay the construction of six new schools. She indicated that Hawke's Bluff was one of the schools that would benefit from an extra school; however, if the School Board did not move forward with all of the new schools, there would be a problem for that school. Ms. Hope explained that the class size amendment by the State of Florida was forthcoming and because of the delays, the School Board decided to complete its own study on class size. The result of the study was a comprehensive plan for each school that showed which school had enough space or which school was in need of a new building or portables. Ms. Hope stated that the comprehensive plan showed that some of the locations slated for new construction by the School Board did not have enough students available to fill the schools. She commented that low real estate sales affected the construction of new schools because if there were no students to fill the schools, there was no justification for new construction.

Ms. Watters confirmed that a large number of people were moving out of South Florida to Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina, where the cost of living was significantly less than living in South Florida. Ms. Hope indicated that the Broward County school system had lost approximately 8,000 students and 6,000 teachers due to relocation. She added that with the pending class size amendment and the need for more teachers to cover those classes, the School Board had to make sure that it was constructing new buildings where there was a need. The delay in the construction of new schools would only be for two years with the hope that the property tax cuts by Governor Charlie Crist would enable people to move back to South Florida. This would allow the School Board to move forward with constructing new schools. Ms. Hope indicated that the slow down of real estate was hurting everyone.

Chair Pisula referred to plans to build a new middle school in the Imagination Farms area and questioned whether this school would still be built. A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the type of school and the proposed location. Ms. Hope commented that a location had not been found to build Cypress Bay School and explained that certain criteria had to be met for a school to be built at a certain location. She indicated that because the Bergeron site had one street, it was inappropriate for a new high school due to the criteria which was determined by the South Florida Planning and Zoning Department which was responsible for determining the mapping of cities and had rejected the site on ten bases. Ms. Hope explained that the South Florida Water Management District had a levy project of 1,500 acres which was being filled with four feet of water, and because this was a \$10 billion project, the South Florida Water Management District would not move the project to build a high school. Ms. Hope commented that although the School Board had not given up, the other alternative would be to build a school in Davie at the Imagination Farms site; however, the residents would not agree to a high school being built in that area.

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A brief discussion ensued regarding the location of the proposed school. Ms. Hope explained that the contract between the School Board and the Town was that only a middle school could be built on the site. She added that if a different type of school was built, the site would revert back to Davie and the school board did not want that to happen. Ms. Hope indicated that because the School Board was a County and State entity, they could eminent domain anywhere, but because the residents and Councilmembers were so vocal, the School Board decided that it would build the middle school.

A lengthy discussion was devoted to safety issues with Ms. Hope commenting that safety was a big issue for her. She indicated that for the first time in Broward County, she had recently held a safety forum at Piper High School. Ms. Hope noticed that there was a great deal of prescription drug abuse within the school system and added that if the Boardmembers wanted her to partner with the School Board on any safety projects, they should let her know and she would be able to get School Board staff do the advertising for the Board.

Ms. Watters expressed frustration that at safety events, the parents who needed to be present were the ones less likely to attend. She asked Ms. Hope if she wanted the Board to share safety information with the teachers, attempt to reach the parents or provide the information to high schools. Ms. Hope responded that it would take a combined effort to find a solution. She suggested newsletters and BECON Television as a means of getting parents' attention. Chair Pisula commented that the Board could work on the safety issues because he had spoken to Public Information Officer Braulio Rosa about the quarterly publication of the Davie Update. He added that if the Boardmembers worked with Mr. Rosa to place information in the Davie Update, it would reach the parents, especially if there was a partnership with the school board.

The Board discussed several Town's events with Mr. Swalley commenting that it might be necessary to "piggyback" the safety events with some of the Town events in the hope of getting parents to attend. Ms. Watters disagreed. Ms. Hope added that she was willing to assist the Board in any way possible.

Ms. Hope spoke about school security and the need to have this reviewed. She highlighted an incident that she saw on a video while attending a safety forum when a gunman entered a school campus, killed three people and held 30 children hostage. She added that watching the video was very scary and although 900 children were rescued, she did not believe that this was a success story because of the hostage situation. Ms. Watters commented that teachers were aware of what to do during a lock down; however, she questioned if they were adequately trained to handle a gunman in a classroom and how to speak to the children so that they remained calm. Chair Pisula responded in the negative. Ms. Hope commented that was her concern and believed that School security should be reviewed.

Chair Pisula spoke about partnering with the School Board on educational issues and asked about how the Board could highlight academic excellence or academic issues in the schools. He commented that an appeal could be made to the Town Council for its assistance in publicizing the issues in the various schools. Ms. Hope agreed with the idea of highlighting academic issues and suggested using local newspapers and the Davie Update and talking with school principals and Parent Teachers Association members. She referred to the advertising by Miami-Dade which was done by billboards and wished Broward County would follow suit. Mr. Swalley's suggestion was videotaping the classroom of influential teachers and distributing those videotapes to other teachers who were less charismatic. Ms. Watters advised that videotaping was already in taking place in schools; however, it was performed live and was similar to a teleconference. Ms. Hope explained that the new technology in place in the Broward County school system was amazing, and it even provided an outlet for blind children. She was impressed that this Board was pushing to make technology one of the premier things that the School Board would continue to move forward with.

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Ms. Watters commented that to acquire national board certification, lessons had to be videotaped and these videotapes had to be sent to the certifying entity to demonstrate how the classes were being conducted. She indicated that it was usually disruptive during the taping sessions because the children turned into little “I-Pod” people because they were aware that they were being taped. Ms. Watters commented that if the average teacher was asked what the number one issue was that prevented them from being a quality teacher, the response would be the number of problems with children that caused discipline issues in the classroom. This would not be seen on the videotape when the children were aware that they were being taped. Ms. Watters added that it was better if a teacher spent the day in another class as an observer which gave a true picture.

Ms. Hope asked how she could assist the Board. Chair Pisula highlighted upcoming Town events and asked how the Board could partner with the school board to create an awareness of this Board. He added that from both an academic and a safety standpoint, the Board wanted to keep abreast of the happenings in Davie schools and felt that a note placed quarterly in the Davie Update to indicate what was happening with the School Board, as well as in some of the schools, was a good start. Ms. Hope indicated that she was in the process of placing a pod cast on her website for the school board that would provide information. Chair Pisula suggested that Ms. Hope provide a link to her website. Ms. Watters asked that Ms. Hope contact the Board if any issues arose where the Board could provide assistance.

The Board asked about mentoring programs and how to get involved. Ms. Hope spoke of the Take Stock in Children program which required a weekly commitment for six years and she highlighted the advantages of the program for the children who were involved. A brief discussion ensued with the Board discussing various programs geared towards assisting students, attaining and maintaining grades, and moving on to college. Ms. Hope commented that it was amazing that children from some of the worst schools in the County attended top colleges in the country and were awarded millions of dollars in scholarships. She added that this happened in spite of all the negative issues.

Ms. Hope referred to the rodent issue at Western High School and commented that after contacting the principal, parents and the safety representative on the issue, she was assured that it was now under control.

Chair Pisula commented that it would be a good to get some air time on BECON Television. Ms. Zane believed that many of the parents that the Board was attempting to reach did not watch that channel. She added that all AM radio stations were required by Federal law, as far as their licensing, to provide a certain amount of time to public service announcements. Ms. Zane commented that people were not being reached and questioned the type of music that they listened to and which stations would be best to place some public service announcements. She explained that if the stations did not receive request for public service announcements, they did not have to use it and the time could be used for paying commercials instead. Chair Pisula suggested that Ms. Zane contact a number of local radio stations to find out about air time to advertise events involving the Board. The information received would be forwarded to Ms. Edwards.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1 Infant and Toddler Safety**

Chair Pisula apprised the Board of the items he located in the storage unit. These included safety helmets and a number of brochures on safety issues. He advised that there were a number of Child Safety Board T-shirts in storage and asked if these could be donated to an organization since that Board no longer existed.

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Ms. Zane made a motion, seconded by Mr. Swalley, to donate half of the T-shirts to Women In Distress and half to the ease Foundation.

A brief discussion followed, with Vice-Chair Harrington inquiring whether both organizations should be in Davie. Chair Pisula indicated that he was not sure. Ms. Watters suggested that all the T-shirts be donated to the ease Foundation.

Ms. Watters questioned if more material was needed concerning infant and toddler safety with Chair Pisula responding in the affirmative and added that more updated material was also needed. Ms. Watters indicated that she would research to find out which brochures were free and place an order. Chair Pisula indicated that the new safety brochures should include seat belts, car seats, pool and gun safety. He advised that he would also contact the National Safety Council for brochures.

Ms. Zane questioned if there was a Welcome Wagon in the Town. Vice-Chair Harrington responded that a Welcome Wagon went door-to-door; however, this practice ended six years ago by the company and they only do advertising by mail.

Discussion continued regarding safety issues with Ms. Watters stating that water safety did not relate only to pools. Gun safety was discussed with Ms. Watters commenting that at previous Town events, gun locks were distributed. She added that all the papers on gun safety being distributed to the parents would not have as much an impact as the gun lock. Ms. Watters stated that children should be taught what to do if they found a gun.

Chair Pisula spoke of a Brevard County Sticker Program. He stated that there was a number on the sticker and the decal would be registered, if the car was stopped by the police with a child in the car, the parents were immediately notified. Chair Pisula explained that the program began in New York four years ago, and to date, 1,700 decals had been distributed and five calls had been placed to parents. Ms. Watters suggested that this should be presented to Police Chief John George for review. Chair Pisula advised that he would speak to Broward Sheriff's Office Chief Ken Jenne about the program. He explained the principles of the program and added that it would be instituted countywide and the Florida Highway Patrol would be involved in the program. Chair Pisula added that this program was being funded by State Farm Insurance.

Ms. Watters referred to the upcoming July 4th Town event and suggested that an email be sent to Boardmembers who did not attend the meeting to see if there was willingness on their part to man the booth and to distribute brochures. Ms. Zane indicated that she would assist with the distribution. Chair Pisula indicated that he had contacted the Boys' Scouts representative and was assured that they would partner with the Board in staffing the booth. Discussion continued regarding the time of the event with Ms. Zane indicating that she would contact Special Projects Director Bonnie Stafiej. Chair Pisula asked that Ms. Zane create an email and forward to the Ms. Edwards who would send this email to the Boardmembers who were absent asking them to sign up to donate time at the event.

Mr. Swalley referred to a previous discussion regarding display cases and indicated that he might be able to make a stencil of a logo for those display cases. There was a brief discussion regarding future events with Ms. Watters indicating that the National Night Out would take place in August. Chair Pisula asked that Ms. Watters confirm the date of the National Night Out and send the information to him by email.

Ms. Watters advised that she had the names of the individuals to contact regarding displaying items at the Nova Schools.

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**4. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business to discuss.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

Chair Pisula suggested that maintaining contact with Ms. Hope would enable the Board to receive information to place in the Davie Update about the positive things happening in Davie schools. He hoped to be able to give a scholarship to a teacher who was nominated as Davie's number one teacher. Ms. Watters commented that there was a Teacher of the Year program operated in every school and this was also done at the County level. She suggested a grant incentive for a school project that would highlight a topic in the classroom; the teachers would send proposals and the winner would get the grant to purchase needed material. Vice-Chair Harrington questioned where the funds would come from with Chair Pisula stating the Board's budget. Vice-Chair Harrington suggested a public safety grant by having a safety competition.

Discussion continued with additional suggestions made for a competition. Mr. Swalley asked who would judge the competition with Chair Pisula responding that it would be the Boardmembers. Chair Pisula commented that the Board should move forward so that information was sent to the schools by September. Ms. Watters suggested having one competition in the spring and another in fall. Chair Pisula commented that the competition would bring public awareness of the Board.

**6. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

Chair Pisula referred to the issue of speakers for upcoming meetings. Ms. Watters commented that there were a number of police officers who specialized in specific issues that would be important to the Board and suggested that Major Taylor be contacted.

Chair Pisula indicated that there would be sexual predator training at the summer schools for the camp counselors and he wanted to give a disk to every family.

Ms. Watters made a motion, seconded by Ms. Zane, that compact disks be given to each summer camp participant. In a voice vote, with Ms. Tilley, Ms. Gulla and Ms. Fallahzadeh being absent, all voted in favor. **(Motion carried 5-0)**

The following items were suggested for the July meeting:

- Speakers for Future Meetings
- Information on Brevard County STOPPED Program
- Grant Issues

**7. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS**

There were no comments or suggestions.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no objections and no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

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Date Approved

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Chair/Board Member